
SENATE BILL 6313

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2006 Regular Session

By Senators Carrell and Stevens

Read first time 01/11/2006. Referred to Committee on Judiciary.

1 AN ACT Relating to recidivism reduction through discharge of
2 convicted felons; amending RCW 9.94A.637; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5 (1) Record numbers of our citizens have been sentenced to prison
6 over the past two decades, more than ninety percent of whom will be
7 reentering society.

8 (2) The successful reentry and reintegration of previously
9 incarcerated men and women is important to the public safety of the
10 state of Washington, to the health of our communities, and to the
11 reduction of the growing costs of the criminal justice system.

12 (3) A comprehensive reentry program, including the removal of
13 unreasonable barriers to reentry, offers the best opportunity for
14 released persons to become productive citizens.

15 (4) Receipt of a certificate of discharge is critical to a released
16 person's ultimate reintegration into society and avoidance of
17 recidivism, including better employability, housing, and the exercise
18 of civil rights.

1 (5) It is in the public interest that a person who has satisfied
2 all incarceration and supervision requirements of his or her sentence
3 receive a certificate of discharge if he or she has made a good faith
4 effort to satisfy all legal financial obligations, according to his or
5 her means, and the legal financial obligations remain enforceable by
6 all parties as a civil judgment.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 9.94A.637 and 2004 c 121 s 2 are each amended to read
8 as follows:

9 (1)(a) When an offender has completed all requirements of the
10 sentence, including any and all legal financial obligations, and while
11 under the custody and supervision of the department, the secretary or
12 the secretary's designee shall notify the sentencing court, which shall
13 discharge the offender and provide the offender with a certificate of
14 discharge by issuing the certificate to the offender in person or by
15 mailing the certificate to the offender's last known address.

16 (b)(i) When an offender has reached the end of his or her
17 supervision with the department and has completed all the requirements
18 of the sentence except his or her legal financial obligations, the
19 secretary's designee shall provide the county clerk with a notice that
20 the offender has completed all nonfinancial requirements of the
21 sentence.

22 (ii) When the department has provided the county clerk with notice
23 that an offender has completed all the requirements of the sentence and
24 the offender subsequently satisfies all legal financial obligations
25 under the sentence, the county clerk shall notify the sentencing court,
26 including the notice from the department, which shall discharge the
27 offender and provide the offender with a certificate of discharge by
28 issuing the certificate to the offender in person or by mailing the
29 certificate to the offender's last known address.

30 (c) When an offender who is subject to requirements of the sentence
31 in addition to the payment of legal financial obligations either is not
32 subject to supervision by the department or does not complete the
33 requirements while under supervision of the department, it is the
34 offender's responsibility to provide the court with verification of the
35 completion of the sentence conditions other than the payment of legal
36 financial obligations. When the offender satisfies all legal financial
37 obligations under the sentence, the county clerk shall notify the

1 sentencing court that the legal financial obligations have been
2 satisfied. When the court has received both notification from the
3 clerk and adequate verification from the offender that the sentence
4 requirements have been completed, the court shall discharge the
5 offender and provide the offender with a certificate of discharge by
6 issuing the certificate to the offender in person or by mailing the
7 certificate to the offender's last known address.

8 (2) The court shall send a copy of every signed certificate of
9 discharge to the auditor for the county in which the court resides and
10 to the department. The department shall create and maintain a data
11 base containing the names of all felons who have been issued
12 certificates of discharge or certificates of conditional discharge, the
13 date of discharge, and the date of conviction and offense.

14 (3) An offender who is not convicted of a violent offense or a sex
15 offense and is sentenced to a term involving community supervision may
16 be considered for a discharge of sentence by the sentencing court prior
17 to the completion of community supervision, provided that the offender
18 has completed at least one-half of the term of community supervision
19 and has met all other sentence requirements.

20 (4) An offender may be considered for a conditional discharge of
21 sentence by the sentencing court prior to completing payment of legal
22 financial obligations, provided that the offender has met all other
23 sentence requirements and has made and is making reasonable efforts to
24 satisfy such legal financial obligations in accordance with the
25 offender's ability to pay. Such conditional discharge shall not affect
26 the offender's liability for legal financial obligations, which shall
27 continue to be enforceable under RCW 9.94A.760(4) as a civil judgment
28 by any party or entity to whom the obligation is owed. In addition,
29 the court shall retain jurisdiction over the offender for purposes of
30 the offender's compliance with payment of the legal financial
31 obligations, and the county clerk shall continue to be authorized to
32 collect unpaid legal financial obligations, in the manner provided in
33 RCW 9.94A.760(4).

34 (5) Except as provided in subsection (~~(+5)~~) (6) of this section,
35 the discharge shall have the effect of restoring all civil rights lost
36 by operation of law upon conviction, and the certificate of discharge
37 shall so state; and the conditional discharge shall have the effect of
38 restoring all civil rights lost by operation of law upon conviction

1 except for the right to vote, and the certificate of conditional
2 discharge shall so state. Nothing in this section prohibits the use of
3 an offender's prior record for purposes of determining sentences for
4 later offenses as provided in this chapter. Nothing in this section
5 affects or prevents use of the offender's prior conviction in a later
6 criminal prosecution either as an element of an offense or for
7 impeachment purposes. A certificate of discharge is not based on a
8 finding of rehabilitation.

9 ((+5)) (6) Unless otherwise ordered by the sentencing court, a
10 certificate of discharge shall not terminate the offender's obligation
11 to comply with an order issued under chapter 10.99 RCW that excludes or
12 prohibits the offender from having contact with a specified person or
13 coming within a set distance of any specified location that was
14 contained in the judgment and sentence. An offender who violates such
15 an order after a certificate of discharge has been issued shall be
16 subject to prosecution according to the chapter under which the order
17 was originally issued.

18 ((+6)) (7) Upon release from custody, the offender may apply to
19 the department for counseling and help in adjusting to the community.
20 This voluntary help may be provided for up to one year following the
21 release from custody.

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